

REMARKS

Claims 1-19 and 21-30 are pending in the present application. Applicants have amended claims 1, 6, 10, 11, 13, 15, 19, and 26, for which support can be found in the claims as originally filed, and in the Applicants' patent application on at least page 18, lines 5-9. In addition to these claim amendments, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider the present application in view of the following remarks:

Request for Expedited Prosecution Under MPEP 707.02

This application, filed on June 20, 2003, has been pending for more than five years. Regarding applications pending more than five years or applications under a third or further action, the MPEP requires the Patent Office to take the following actions:

The supervisory patent examiners should impress their assistants with the fact that the shortest path to the final disposition of an application is by finding the best references on the first search and carefully applying them.

The supervisory patent examiners are expected to personally check on the pendency of every application which is up for the third or subsequent *>Office< action with a view to finally concluding its prosecution.

Any application that has been pending five years should be carefully studied by the supervisory patent examiner and every effort >should be< made to terminate its prosecution. In order to accomplish this result, the application is to be considered "special" by the examiner. (MPEP 707.02).

Because this application has been pending for more than five years, Applicants request that this application be considered special by the Examiner. Applicants also request that the Supervisory Patent Examiner carefully study this application and personally consider any future rejections made in this case, as stated by MPEP 707.02. Applicants further request that the Supervisory Examiner make every effort to terminate prosecution by either issuing valid rejections or by allowing the claims.

CONCLUSION

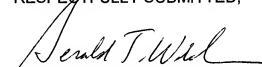
Applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims are in condition for full allowance and the same is respectfully requested.

To provide for the possibility that Applicants have overlooked the need for a fee, including a fee for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136(a), the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any underpayment of fees or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-3140 of Sonnenschein Nath & Rosenthal LLP.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number if, in the opinion of the Examiner, such a telephone conference would expedite or aid the prosecution and examination of this application. Any communication initiated under this paragraph should be deemed an "Applicant-Initiated Interview."

DATE: 3/24/09

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED,



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